

AN
ESSAY
ON
FRIENDSHIP;
OR, A
MORAL DISCOURSE
ON THE
Nature and Effects of mutual
LOVE.

By TIMOTHY GREATED, *Gent.*

THE SECOND EDITION.

PROVERBS xvii. 17.
*A Friend loveth at all times, and a Brother is born for
adversity.*

Tuque (quod est rarum) præsta constanter ad omne
Indeclinatæ munus Amicitiae. *Ovid.*

L O N D O N :

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ESSAY

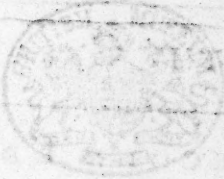
ON THE

MORAL DISPOSITION

OF THE

HEART AND MIND OF MANKIND

BY



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To my much esteemed FRIEND,
Mr. JOSEPH BRIAN.

S I R,
 S intimate Friendship is the theme of the following sheets, the nature of the argument requires, that I should inscribe it to a particular Friend; and, this being the case, I could think of none more suitable to my present purpose than Yourself, who have lately given me the most undeniable proofs of your regard and affection.

Indeed, addressee of this sort are usually directed to persons of rank and distinction; and that because such alone are in a condition to gratify the author's vanity and mercenary views. But as nothing is more abhorrent to me than fulsome adulation, how much soever it might turn to advantage; so it is on the other hand an agreeable task to pay a compliment, when I am convinced it may be done with honour and justice.

A 2

I might

ii DEDICATION.

I might here take occasion to display my obligations, were it not that I know nothing is more grating to a generous soul; and I shall therefore content myself with saying in one word, that I consider it as more honourable to stand in the relation of a Friend to a gentleman of your sense, good-nature, and integrity, than in that of a vassal to the most opulent or noble patrons.

I am satisfied that I shall never forget your late uncommon instances of real Friendship; and you may rest assured, that I am not a little delighted with the present opportunity of subscribing myself,

S I R,

Your most obedient,

Most humble, and devoted Servant,

Timothy Greated.



THE PREFACE.



*I*N my preface to the former edition of the following tract, published about ten years ago, I took notice, that it was done at the request of a particular Friend; and the success and encouragement I then met with I am willing to ascribe to the candour and generosity of my Friends, rather than to the merit of the performance.

As to the subject matter of this Essay, it, questionless, requires a more masterly pen than mine, to represent it in true and lively colours; and it must be exceeding vain to imagine it possible for a person of my slender abilities to improve upon a theme, that a Tully, a Bacon, and a Clarendon have in a manner exhausted.

The PREFACE.

But as the same argument may be handled in different lights; so it sometimes happens, that a new turn, tho' for substance of a piece with what has been formerly written, makes it appear in a more agreeable point of view, and to more advantage.

The method I have observed I hope will, upon examination, be found to be plain and natural; and that the objections against intimate Friendship are more fully and distinctly considered, than in any former Discourse on the subject.

I shall always, on this or any other occasion, take in good part, and with the utmost gratitude, the candid censures of the wise and judicious; and, at the same time, it is my firm resolution to be very little moved at the ill-natured remarks of the critical and captious.



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in the world, had no longer
be the plague of the community, but
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or contentment. It would have been
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ESSAY
ON
FRIENDSHIP.



LOVE, like the rest of the human passions, becomes either a virtuous or vicious principle of action, as it is placed on good or bad objects. If it center upon our fellow-creatures, and excite us to oblige one another by all the kind offices in our power, it is properly situated, and will of course introduce peace and happiness among men. The Love of mankind is a B genuine

genuine dictate of reason, and nature herself hath implanted in our breasts tender sentiments of humanity towards others ; and as this duty is highly reasonable, so, were it duly discharged by all ranks and degrees of persons, it would infallibly promote the good of society. If Love, undissembled Love, did universally prevail in the world, base designs would no longer be the plague of any community ; but truth and innocence, good-nature and bounty, triumphantly reign without check or controul. Then would this earth become a paradise, as beautiful in a moral as natural view ; and all the desires and endeavours of its inhabitants conspire in promoting the common advantage.

But tho' it be the particular interest of every man to consult the welfare of mankind in general, and we can never honour human nature more than by such a practice : Yet if we look abroad into the world, it will evidently appear that vice and enmity obtain a mighty sway in the hearts and inclinations of men. Instead of an universal harmony, we shall discover little else but discord and confusion ; and, were it not for human laws, it would be safer for us to live in a forest with bears

on FRIENDSHIP. 3

bears and tygers, than among rational beings.

It must be confessed, indeed, that we may daily meet with persons, who will take all imaginable pains to possess us with a raised notion of their kindness and generosity; but a thorough examination into the principles of their actions will abundantly shew, that all their pompous professions are nothing else but art and policy to impose upon our weakness. True Friendship is seated in the heart, and consists in an uniform course of obliging offices, not in outward expressions; and therefore few of those with whom we converse deserve the sacred epithet of a Friend. If to flatter us into a vain conceit of our own abilities, or a set of complimentary phrases, were a sufficient test of sincere affection for us, we may always be furnished with a set of parasites, that will serve us thus far: But if to be a Friend is to be another Self, and if he be under indispensable obligations, on all occasions, to deal with us in an ingenuous manner; if none can be justly said to love us who will not be inviolably faithful in every circumstance of life, however miserable and calamitous,

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we may justly conclude, that he who finds
a true Friend discovers a treasure.

It is not my design, in the following
sheets, to discourse of the common sort
of Friendship in fashion among men;
which is a mere politic engine to seduce
innocent and well-meaning persons, and
differs as much from that which is founded
on rational principles as the worst picture
does from the life. This phantom is at
best but a shadow of true intimate Friend-
ship; and, however it may be counte-
nanced by the giddy multitude, is in
reality unworthy a man of honour and
conscience. What I propose to consider
and recommend is that solemn engage-
ment founded on mutual Love, whereby
two particular persons of Sense, Good-
nature, and Virtue oblige themselves, on
all suitable opportunities, both by coun-
sel and action, to promote each other's
real advantage. In this light, the cha-
racter of a Friend is very copious and
extensive; and it requires the labour of
a whole life to answer the same. All
men are not qualified for the discharge of
this important office, as very few have
capacity and inclination to fulfil it; but,
tho'

ON FRIENDSHIP. 5

tho' it be an extraordinary rarity, it is not impossible to find a true Friend.

There have in all ages been some happy pairs inseparably attached to each other's interest: And, as human nature is always the same, it is not to be doubted but there are, at this day, great and noble Spirits, who strive to excel one another in kind and obliging actions. The foundation of this union is a suitableness of temper and disposition; and it is natural for all men to chuse persons of the same taste for their companions. As we love ourselves, so we love those that resemble us in the same way of thinking and acting; and, for the same reason, generous and exalted souls attract the esteem and love of one another. Love in the general is a vigorous and lively principle; and, in the case before us, it engages all our capacities and powers in the service of the person beloved.

This divine relation is sometimes commenced on sudden occasions; a surprising act of valour or generosity, which carries with it satisfying evidence of the worth of the man who has performed it, at once captivates an unprejudiced and noble heart

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heart into the closest alliance. But, generally speaking, intimate Friendship is the result of time and experience ; and, considering the treachery and baseness of mankind, it is always advisable to be extremely deliberate in the choice of a Friend. However, tho' too much credulity is to be avoided, and prudence directs us to the utmost caution, before we determine our affection, it will be requisite to accept with pleasure the service of a Bosom-companion, when we have all the moral inducements we can desire to convince us of his integrity ; and if we meet with one qualified with Good Sense, Good-nature, and Virtue, we may safely place a confidence in him.

As to Good Sense, it is of such consequence in our passage through life, that scarce any affair of moment can be dispatched without it, much less an office of such a delicate and difficult nature as that of a Friend. This great accomplishment does not consist in a luxuriant fancy, nor in a confused jumble of abstract ideas ; but in a sound judgment of men and things. It is possible a man may be a celebrated wit, and a prodigy of learning, and yet want this useful embellishment,

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ment, which gives the finishing to all other excellencies; for it is not the gift of nature, as a fine imagination, nor is it like the knowledge of letters, to be obtained by poring over books, but by reflection and observation on human nature. We must converse with mankind, and, what is more, with ourselves with the greatest care and attention; if ever we become masters of Good Sense. He, that has this extensive quality, must be no stranger to the various tempers and manners of men; and farther, he must not acquiesce in a bare speculative notion of those useful discoveries, but make a true use of his experience in modelling his own conduct in life. As a judicious traveller observes with the utmost exactness the manners and customs of foreign climates, that he may polish his own behaviour, and return wiser home into his native country: So a discerning person observes life in its different views, that he may improve himself, and correct his own mistaken apprehensions. Accordingly, the person, who hath attained this valuable quality, never fails to please in conversation; whilst the rude pertness of the volatile wit, and the sullen pedantry of the mere scholar, give the greatest uneasiness.

ness. These men in their commerce with their fellow-creatures are too much devoted to pride or a selfish humour, and act at random; whilst the other thinks before he speaks, and is always ambitious of behaving agreeably. Now, can we think that either the one or the other of these is fit for the cabinet, to be a bosom-favourite, whose carriage is ungracious even at table? A curious painter may as well admire a ridiculous piece of daubing, as one of a distinguishing taste be pleased with such a companion, who would sacrifice all his Friends at a venture, rather than restrain or govern his temper.

If a wise prince always selects the most penetrating of his subjects to be his privy-counsellors or special favourites, because such alone are fit to be trusted with the mysteries of state and springs of government: Surely, a wise man will be no less cautious in the choice of another self. A Friend hath a variety of obligations to discharge, which require great skill and application; he must advise with judgment, reprove with discretion, and on every emergency suit his conduct to the present occasion, by using the most proper and effectual means to serve the man he loves;

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loves; and can all this be done without a sufficient fund of Good Sense? We may as reasonably expect that a fool should make a good general, and acquit himself with honour in the field of battle, as act the part of a true Friend. Whosoever would perform the various offices of Friendship, must, like a knowing physician, be able to apply proper remedies in every case of necessity and danger; which can never be done without the labour of thought and consideration. But, if it be our happiness to meet with a man of parts and penetration, he is worthy our esteem and love, for he will accommodate his actions to our circumstances, and on all occasions carry himself, as the nature of the thing requires.

Good Sense is the parent of prudence; and, how beneficial an habit this is, is notoriously evident from daily experience and observation. Even Virtue itself receives an additional lustre from this excellent attendant, and appears to very great disadvantage without it; for as the finest picture loses much of its beauty, if it be seen in a wrong point of light, so even innocence itself is less charming and graceful, if it be not adorned with discretion: But, if wisdom once prevails, it sets off all our actions with a becoming grace.

A man,

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A man, thus qualified, never wants an opportunity of entertaining, improving, or assisting his Friend; he is a faithful counsellor, a discreet monitor, a constant support under all revolutions that can happen; and daily affords some testimony or other of his fidelity and affection.

But as good Sense, so Good-nature is a necessary qualification in an intimate Friend. The finest Sense is not a sufficient recommendation, if it be not attended with this disposition. Wisdom itself without Good Nature is rather to be avoided than courted; for as it resembles the serpent in sagacity, so in its cruelty too. In this view, it is nothing else but craft and policy, and always employed to the prejudice of mankind. Subtle plodding knaves are by no means to be allowed a place in our bosom, but we should detest them as we do vipers, since they are not less venomous and destructive. They live not as members of society, but as persons independent; and having neither honour nor conscience, to restrain their malice, they boggle at no projects, however pernicious to their fellow-creatures; and therefore, as we can never be too careful in guarding against their attempts, we

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we should avoid their company, and place no confidence in them.

Ill-nature carries in it such a plain contradiction to the nature of man, that the ancient *Romans* branded it with the name of Inhumanity; as the contrary disposition was, in their language, called *Humanitas*. To be born ill-natured is a very great unhappiness; for, unless this natural inclination be mastered at first by a virtuous education, it will in time become head-strong and outrageous, and produce the most fatal effects. One of this stubborn temper, who takes no pains to conquer it, is subject to envy, malice, and all other unfociable vices; and consequently unworthy of our esteem and love. If then the ill-natured man, even of the greatest parts and sagacity, be unfit for confidence in the case of Friendship; how strongly does a kind good-natured person recommend himself to our notice and choice; he, who takes more pleasure in bestowing than receiving a benefit, and rejoices at every opportunity for so doing.

But, as the best things in the world may be abused, so Good-nature itself, if not attended by discretion, is weakness
and

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and folly. Fools of this sort never consider, whom they oblige; but the first that comes in their way, perhaps, an utter enemy, is welcome to their favours. The gifts of those men have not that engaging force, as if they were bestowed with judgment; because it is not the merit of the object, which excites their bounty. Benefits, thus promiscuously distributed, seldom tend to the reputation or advantage of the foolish benefactor; if he falls into good hands, he is pitied, and guarded against danger; but, as he has often to do with the politic and subtle part of mankind, he is easily imposed upon and circumvented.

This consideration, I humbly presume, induced my Lord *Hallifax*, in his Advice to his Daughter, to affirm, "That Good Sense hath a mixture of the surly in its nature." It must be confessed, that surliness and Good Sense sometimes meet together; and that an unbounded flow of Good-nature makes a man a prey to every designing villain; but yet I will venture to assert, That neither Good-nature without Good Sense, nor surly Good Sense without Good-nature, is of any signification, in the instance of
a Friend;

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a Friend ; for as the good-natured fool wants a sufficient fund, to be a confident ; so the surly man of sense has not delicacy enough to carry on intimate Friendship.

I will not deny but a person of a surly disposition may be possessed of several valuable qualities ; he may not only be judicious, but likewise have a just regard for the interests of Virtue : But, notwithstanding all this, without good humour, he is as unfit for the business of a Friend, as *Dio- genes* for a court. Moroseness on either side between two particular companions will destroy that freedom and openness of temper, which is the very life of Friendship ; for, in this case, no reserve is allowable, but every thing must be ingenuously imparted, that can contribute to our own ease, or our Friend's satisfaction.

In common conversation, prudence directs us to be sometimes shy and cautious ; yet even here roughness is far from being allowable. The surly morose man is generally despised in all companies, whilst one of a sweet obliging temper is every-where valued and respected ; and, among intimate Friends, ill-nature, in every form, is altogether intolerable. The least degree
of

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of peevishness is of bad consequence to mutual Love, much more an inveterate habit of furliness; but, when Good Sense and Good-nature unite in the same person, the one qualifies and tempers the other. The wise good-natured man knows when to act, and that in the most engaging manner; his understanding and will, head and heart, keep pace together; for no sooner does his reason tell him, that this or that particular act of kindness is requisite, but he performs it with the greatest cheerfulness. He is all life and spirit, when concerned about the service of his Friend; and the pleasure, that diffuses itself all over his countenance, and attends every circumstance of his friendly offices, makes the deepest impressions upon the person obliged. The receiver is not more agreeably pleased with the gift itself, than he is charmed with the generosity of the giver; and every new obligation does not only secure, but increase his affection.

But, besides Good Sense and Good-nature, Virtue is likewise necessary to complete the character of a Friend. As this mutual engagement can never be successful without integrity: So Virtue is the best pledge to ensure this blessing. The man, who
makes

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makes a practice of affronting Heaven, and counteracting the dictates of the law of nature, is not to be depended upon in the management of the common affairs of life; much less in the case under consideration: His views are too low and mean, for acting the noble and generous part of another Self. He will be no longer faithful, than whilst he can serve his own private ends; but, whenever his obligations to his Friend interfere with his ambition, avarice, or any other vicious passion, which has the ascendant over him, he will entirely overlook them. For instance, how is it possible that the miser, whose affection is so entirely placed upon his wealth, as to leave no vacant corner for any thing else, should admit a man of worth a share in his bosom? *Seneca* adviseth us, to avoid such narrow-souled wretches, as we would a plague, since a pestilence is not more ruinous to society. And, indeed, there is not any vice more repugnant to true Friendship, than this; for it is not to be stopped in its career by any considerations, but even honour and conscience lie prostrate before it.

In a well regulated state, perhaps, those men will be punctual to their promises, as far

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far as they relate to their trade and dealings in the world, because, without the reputation of honesty, they could not so effectually fill their coffers; and besides, the law obliges them to make good their engagements: But what can we expect from such worldlings, who make themselves the center of all their actions, and obstinately pursue their own private interests, when we have nothing but their honour to rely on, as in the case before us. Whatever professions of love and kindness, such wretches may make, we should lay no stress on them; for if we credit their declarations, we shall find them at the long-run false and deceitful.

If then the vicious man, who is a slave to his passions, is incapable of being a sincere Friend; it follows, that the virtuous man alone is qualified to answer this character. By a virtuous man, I mean one that endeavours to perform all his obligations to GOD, his fellow-creatures, and himself; and none can deserve this name, who does not make it his study to discharge his duty in all its branches. He, that is careful to please his CREATOR, will never want a just sense of the kind offices he owes to his neighbour; and, when he

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he hath chosen any particular person to be his intimate companion, he will love him as himself, and be as tenderly concerned for his real advantage as his own. Honour and conscience, the principles on which he constantly acts, so closely unite his heart to that of his Friend, that his life is not dearer to him than his integrity. —

And as all the Virtues are requisite to carry on a rational Friendship, so especially is that of true Courage. This heroic disposition spirits us up to the practice of our whole duty, as men and christians, and inspires us with becoming patience under all the evils that befall us; and therefore it cannot but be highly useful to particular Friends, since such a noble energy of soul will furnish them with undaunted resolution to persevere in their mutual and endearing engagements, in spite of all opposition. To persist in base and dishonourable designs is obstinacy and weakness; but to pursue with vigour and constancy such as are great and laudable, argues a brave and exalted spirit; and whosoever considers that Friendship is for life and liable to many lets and interruptions, thro' the malice and envy of mankind, will be convinced that nothing less than

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the

the most intrepid fortitude of mind is able to preserve it inviolable.

The slanderer takes a malicious pleasure in dividing Friends, and will never want a plausible tale to create a breach between them; but we should banish all such sort of vermin from our acquaintance. These officious busy-bodies are mere incendiaries, and active for no other reason but to do mischief; like *Nero*, who set *Rome*, the metropolis of his empire, on fire, to gratify a mad and extravagant inclination, they delight, by lying stories, to kindle flames of enmity and discord in the world. The tale-bearer, indeed, is always industrious, in attempting to conceal his inhuman intentions by the most artful disguises; when he paints our Friend in the blackest colours, to render him odious and contemptible, he will have the assurance to tell us, that he thereby consults our safety and advantage: But these are only so many words of course, to possess us with a favourable opinion of his proceedings; for he has as little value for us as the person he defames, and his main view is, by imposing on our credulity, to ruin us both.

To fortify our minds against the influence

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ence of slander and detraction, in the case of Friendship, it will be of use to consider that base and ignoble spirits, having an inward aversion to men of real worth, make them, in an especial manner, the butts of their envy and ill-nature; and invent the most groundless calumnies, to eclipse their reputation: Great souls, who are conscious of their own innocence, are willing to put the best construction on the actions of others; but the wretches, I have been speaking of, are of a quite contrary genius and disposition: Now, when such creatures as these endeavour to infuse into us prejudices against a man, whose integrity has been confirmed by the most convincing proofs, we should at once suspect them as impostors, and despise their insinuations.

To be credulous argues a great weakness in the understanding, and is generally attended with the most fatal effects. What tragedies have been acted upon the stage of this world, by too easy a belief of false informations, is notorious in history. *Herod's* rashness in giving into the report of his wife's disloyalty, *Josephus* assures us, was the melancholy cause of the destruction not only of an innocent *Mari-
anne*, but of her whole family; and how

often, since that time, hath unspotted Virtue suffered by the same methods? The son of *Syrach* wisely observes, *Eccles. xxii. 24. As the vapour and smoak of a furnace goeth before the fire; so reviling before blood.* And this observation has been too frequently verified in life. Now, these things being considered, it must of consequence highly concern us to guard against the wicked surmises of the whisperer; for, if we give him the least countenance, he will at length fill our heads with vain suspicions and jealousies, which sap the very foundation of true Friendship.

Besides all this, let us reflect upon the prodigious uneasiness which will seize us, when we have suffered a faithful Friend, by our folly, to be torn from our very bosom, where he was like ivy clasped about an oak, and nothing else but death could have dissolved this intimate union, and in process of time discover the falshood of those malicious reproaches which occasioned a separation: Then shall we be confounded at a view of our unreasonable behaviour, and willing, when it is too late, to part with every thing that is dear and valuable, to redeem the precious jewel we have irrecoverably lost.

I would

I would not, by what has been said, be thought to mean, that we are tamely to sit under the treachery of a false Friend : No ! this would be a piece of madness and stupidity, and only add to our disappointment. But, having chosen a confident, whom, from long experience, we have found every way capable of acting up to his character, and ready to prove his fidelity on all occasions, we should not rashly, never without the most unexceptionable evidence, believe him otherwise. If our other Self continue steady, we should overlook all petty censures ; nay, tho' the whole world unanimously combine against him, it should only whet our ambition to be the more active and vigorous in his defence, and rather gloriously fall a sacrifice than basely desert him. In this light, a man appears to very great advantage, and attracts the respect and esteem of all that have just notions of honour. As for the uncertain giddy fool, who moves upon unsteady principles, he is liable to be diverted from his designs, by every little obstacle that comes in his way ; and, if he enter into Friendship with any one, he will forsake him, when he has the most need for his service, in extremity ; but he, who is

armed with true Courage, will, in spite of every intervening accident or calamity, preserve his integrity. Thus, I have given some account of the several essential qualifications of an intimate Friend; and, when all these meet together, I am confident nothing will be wanting to complete the character. When our bosom-acquaintance is furnished with the policy of the serpent as well as innocence of the dove, and has both capacity and inclination to promote our interest, what more can be desired from him?

But, tho' I have supposed Good Sense, Good Nature, and Virtue to be absolutely necessary, to begin and carry on a rational Friendship, I am far from thinking any man to be so thoroughly possessed of those excellent qualities, as never to be deficient in his conduct. A person of the best sense is not infallible in his judgment either of men or things; one of the sweetest natural tempers may be sometimes out of humour; the most virtuous are still but men, and consequently liable to commit blunders in life; as the most resolute hero is not incapable of sudden shocks and surprizes. The sun itself, that bright and glorious body, is sometimes eclipsed, and
has

on FRIENDSHIP. 23

has its spots too ; and, while human nature is in its present state, it is in vain to look for absolute perfection : But however, the more we excel in the exercise of those qualifications I have mentioned, we become the more accomplished for the discharge of the office of a Friend, and may expect so much greater satisfaction in such an undertaking.

Several other things might be taken notice of, as proper appendages of Friendship ; namely, that the parties engaging in it should be of the same age, of equal fortune, and the like. But if each of them be furnished with those substantial ornaments, Good Sense, Good-nature, and Virtue, all other inequalities will be with pleasure adjusted. There is one Particular, however, not improper to be mentioned here, before I proceed to consider the advantages that follow upon intimate Friendship : That it is by no means advisable to enter into such an engagement with single persons of a different sex.

In a married state, I doubt not but many have found the blessed effects of mutual Love ; and no reason can be given, why husband and wife, provided prudence hath been

been used in the first choice, may not be entire Friends to one another. When there is a consent of wills as well as a verbal contract, happiness is the natural and genuine fruit of matrimony ; and, bad as the world is, it is not to be questioned, but there are at present several agreeable pairs joined in wedlock, who make the pleasing each other, by the most endearing offices of love and kindness, their principal study. And, indeed, what view can afford greater satisfaction to an honest mind than that of husband and wife always assiduous to suit their tempers to one another, and on all occasions affording just proofs of a reciprocal affection? When nature not chance, inclination not constraint, has been concerned in the marriage-union, it opens a large scene of delight and pleasure to the parties engaged ; in this case, Love diffuseth itself in all their words and actions, and continues strong and vigorous, even to the last : No misfortunes whatsoever will be able to extinguish this sacred flame, but it will continue fierce and vehement, under every revolution.

But as for the notion of *Platonic Love*, it seems to be nothing more than a creature of the understanding ; which, tho' it
may

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may amuse the fancy, is too abstract to take place in life. The gentlemen, who are charmed with this delusive dream, imagine it practicable, that two single persons of different sexes may have the greatest esteem for each other; nay, love with transport and passion, converse familiarly and frequently, retired from the rest of mankind, and yet have no desires after carnal acquaintance.

This conceit, in my opinion, is purely chimerical; for as nature has implanted in the breasts of both sexes, male as well as female, soft and tender inclinations towards each other, to suppose that these can be always suppressed and over-ruled, when there are constant opportunities of enjoyment, is to raise human nature above its present condition. Such an exalted pitch of Virtue properly suits the circumstances of a seraph or a saint in heaven, where no criminal passions can have admittance; but it is too refined for men that consist of flesh and blood, and are consequently susceptible of sensual desires. Brothers and sisters, and very near relations, may possibly answer the character of *Platonic* lovers, by holding the most intimate correspondence with safety and innocence:

But,

But, if any other single persons of different sexes pretend to such an union of souls, it is a thousand to one but their love at length degenerates into lust, and they find themselves mistaken at the expence of their Virtue.

Several young persons of both sexes have been deceived into this idle opinion, who, by fondly indulging it, have forfeited their honour; and it is next to a miracle, if it ever happen otherwise. *Abelard* and *Heloise* had the greatest value and affection for each other, and were in all respects qualified for carrying on a rational Friendship: Yet their story informs us, that their Love, notwithstanding, at length became a vicious passion, and they gratified it with delight and pleasure. But tho' *Platonic* Love is not wholly impossible, and there may, perhaps, have been some extraordinary instances of those who have reduced it to practice; yet the difficulty of preserving our chastity makes it rashness to be concerned in an affair that is oftener prejudicial than safe. Who will run so dangerous a risque, when all the satisfaction we can propose, by doing so, may be obtained at a far easier rate, by either choosing an agreeable wife, or a prudent Friend

on FRIENDSHIP. 27

Friend of our own sex? Will any man in his senses venture his all to the mercy of the winds and weather, by trading to distant climates, where a single calamity may altogether ruin him, when he has an opportunity of improving his fortune to much more advantage at home, without any hazard at all?

And as it is safest to make those our bosom-friends, who are of our own sex, unless we enter into the bonds of matrimony; so private persons alone are fit to be chosen. This divine relation of intimate Friendship has nothing to do with courts and palaces. Princes and great men have always some private views in their regards to their creatures; and, as policy first sets them upon bestowing their favours on any, reasons of state will oblige them to withdraw them, when the present turn is served. The same cause, that creates an intimacy between them and their dependents, does likewise destroy it; and, like the office of a prime minister, it continues no longer than during pleasure. But as envy, pride, ambition, and other vices, which have a peculiar influence over men that move in a high sphere, and are placed in public stations, do not prevail so much in private life,

life, it is here most likely to find a true Friend ; and if we discover one that has all the qualifications, I have been so particular in recounting, we may safely place an entire confidence in him. Friendship, under the restrictions assigned above, must appear to every judicious understanding a very eligible relation ; when it is under the direction of wisdom, and fixed on a virtuous foundation, it must of necessity produce the most desirable fruit.

Indeed, if a bare union of wills were sufficient to constitute this mutual engagement, without any regard to honour and conscience, the devils themselves might claim the character of Friends. These apostate spirits have great natural capacities, and unite unanimously in all their hellish enterprizes to the prejudice of mankind : But can an impious conspiracy, how deeply soever projected, and obstinately put in execution, be stiled Friendship ? No, resolution, and even fidelity in this case, enhances the malignity of the crime ; and it is thus likewise, with respect to men themselves. The union of villains adds an accent to their villany ; and faith to one another in designs to the prejudice of society, or to a single member of it, is an
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on FRIENDSHIP. 29

aggravating circumstance to inflame their guilt. Our actions must flow from generous principles, and be subservient to the interests of Virtue, if we can deserve the sacred epithet of a Friend: But when the true benefit of mankind is consulted, and it is our whole study to oblige those we love, by doing all that is in our power for their present and future advantage, it is easy to foresee what a train of beneficial effects will follow upon reciprocal affection.

But this leads me particularly to consider the numerous advantages that attend intimate Friendship: And, indeed, here is a large field for reflection, for what instance of it is not attended with a variety of blessings, its genuine effects? Are Tranquillity of mind, Progress in useful knowledge, Improvement in virtue, or temporal Interest, desirable advantages? They are all the natural consequences of intimate Love.

As to the first of these, Tranquillity of mind, it hath always been thought a jewel of inestimable value; and wise men, in every age, have made it their study to find it. Reason and consideration are very

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very useful in our pursuits after true contentment; but, if Friendship be super-added, nothing can be wanting, to render them successful. The man, who is supplied with a bosom-friend, is easy in every circumstance of life; his thoughts are ever composed and his desires even. Prosperity, with all its glittering attendants, cannot dazzle his eyes, and fill him with pride or any other uneasy passions; nor adversity, in the most gloomy and dismal form, depress his spirits; but, whatever revolutions happen, he is still the same, enjoying an uninterrupted inward serenity. If Fortune smiles upon him, he knows how to make the best use of her favours; for he can refine and heighten all the pleasures he meets with, and extract the very quintessence of sensual delights. As poignant sauces whet the appetite, and add to the delicacy of an entertainment; so the satisfaction arising from a virtuous Friendship gives us a true and elegant taste for all others.

All the passions of the soul, that of joy as well as sorrow, are accompanied with bodily emotions; and, in proportion as our joys are greater or less, their emotions are more or less violent: Now, the
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ON FRIENDSHIP. 31

communicating our joys to another, especially an intimate companion, as it abates their violence, it increaseth our happiness. The share, that our other Self has in our joys, causeth us to rejoice the more; for by this means we discharge the swellings of the heart, and give an agreeable vent to a smothered passion. Our joys may be compared to the rays of the sun; for as these afford an exceeding pleasure to the senses, as they discover to our view the face of nature in all its verdure and glory, if they be moderate, yet, when fierce and vehement, scorch and overset us: So our joys are as painful and intolerable as our griefs, if not qualified and allayed by a free communication. A sudden and excessive transport of joy has sometimes been so destructive, as to oppress the vital spirits and occasion instant death: And, did not mankind disburthen themselves of such an insupportable load, by imparting their joys to others, it would often produce the same fatal effects. History gives us many uncontested proofs of this point; and the wisest men have found not only the burthen of their transport, at the first account of any extraordinary piece of good fortune, lessened by the kind interposal of a bosom-friend,
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but their pleasure raised and augmented.

The ancient *Romans* had such a reverence for Friendship that they paid it divine honours ; and their most eminent Poets and Philosophers looked upon the enjoyment of a judicious intimate companion, as the greatest satisfaction in life. *Horace*, in particular, is very elegant in describing the entertainments he met with of this kind ; and we learn from several of his *Odes*, that all the delights of a rural retirement, when he had an affluence of every thing that could please his senses, could afford him no true pleasure, without the conversation of a *Mæcenas*, a *Virgil*, or some other polite Friend. *Tully*, who was a famous Orator as well as Philosopher, wrote a discourse upon Friendship, to testify the special regard he bore to this delightful relation ; and, in his *Offices*, gives a variety of hints to the same purpose : And, indeed, tho' a man were as great as *Alexander*, as wise as *Solon*, and as rich as *Cræsus*, he would still want an agreeable companion, to complete his happiness. *Plutarch*, who was in easy circumstances, and besides, a celebrated Moralist among the *Grecians*, owns that the
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love of his brother *Timon* gave additional charms to all his other enjoyments. His words are these: "As for myself, tho' Fortune, on several occasions, has been favourable to me, I have no obligation so great to her, as the Friendship which my brother *Timon* has always borne, and still bears me: And this is so evident, that it cannot but be noted by all our acquaintance.

But as the happiness of Friendship in prosperity is not so liable to exception; let us take a view of it under adversity, and we shall see, that this brings along with it Tranquillity of mind, no less than the former. A man of integrity, reduced to the last extremity, has no cause to be dejected or moved; for the consciousness of his innocence will support him under the most pressing calamities, and constantly preserve an inward quiet. Philosophy and reflection will, on every occasion, assist him in maintaining a becoming temper of mind: But, if Friendship be also called in to his succour, what calamity can annoy him, or ruffle the steady temper of his soul? As a skilful Chymist is able to extract useful medicines out of poisonous ingredients; so a Friend can turn a dun-

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on into a palace, and tho' an individual be equal to every thing else: His undissembled sympathy dischargeth the swellings of his favourite's heart, and the load, however weighty, is made much lighter by his bearing a part of it. Two sincere companions have so quick an apprehension of each other's sufferings, that they have but one common sense between them; for every grief has alternately a place in their breasts, and the misfortune, by being made familiar, loseth its virulency.

Every considerate person cannot but observe, that life is attended with a variety of evils, and, how far they may be plunged into difficulties, their utmost sagacity is unable to foresee: But wisdom directs us to prepare for all events, even the most calamitous. Now, the best method either truly to enjoy what we possess at present, or patiently bear the loss of our possessions, is to choose a man of sense and probity to be our particular Friend; for, however Fortune may jilt us, he will be as constant to us as the needle to the pole. As he has taken us under his care, for better for worse; so, tho' it is not in his power to over-rule the will of Heaven, he will contribute his utmost efforts to prevent our
misery,

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misery, or else furnish us with proper expedients to bear up with courage under it. If a bare imaginary hope of relief has been sometimes sufficient to raise the spirits of a wretch involved in an ocean of perplexity, of what mighty influence must a rational expectation founded on the promise of one, who has been always ready to serve us in distress, be? Despair is by this means entirely banished, and a scene of comfort opens to the mind, in spite of the most pressing discouragements. This consideration gave occasion to the following expressions of *Crates*, a great Philosopher, viz. "In Friendship and Philosophy my happiness consisteth; without Friendship I hold life to be death, without Philosophy a disease." The bosom of a Friend, except Divine Providence, is the best anchor in the tempestuous sea of life; for whether poverty, disgrace, sickness, and bodily pain, or any other be the grievances we labour under, they are far from being intolerable with the concurrence of a faithful companion.

As for poverty; tho' it be our misfortune to be reduced to the most narrow circumstances, we may be sure our Friend will exert himself to supply our necessities.

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His regard for us is not confined to the figure we make in the world ; for he knows that riches are very precarious and uncertain, and the most excellent and deserving are often exposed to the frowns of Fortune as well as others. We are still the same in his view ; and therefore as he thoroughly loves us, on the account of the qualifications of our souls, which are still as agreeable to him as ever, he is at once affected with a tender sympathy for us, and rejoices at so fair an opportunity of attesting his Love.

Is our Reputation struck at by malicious enemies ? A Friend will be very solicitous to remove false prejudices against us, as it is more in his power than our own to serve us on this occasion ; he will leave no prudent measures unattempted to retrieve our character, and, if all his most vigorous endeavours should prove abortive, he will, at this critical juncture, more emphatically discover his value for us, by making it evident that his judgment and affection are not to be directed by the humour and caprice of the giddy multitude, in contradiction to his own experience. The slanderer may asperse his Friend and load him with reproaches ; but such wicked aspersions

ON FRIENDSHIP. 37

sions have no more influence upon him, as to changing his sentiments, than the croaking of a frog, or the hissing of a serpent : So that disgrace itself does not create a separation between intimate companions, but, notwithstanding this impediment, their Friendship, and consequently inward Tranquillity, continues firm and immoveable.

If we be deprived of bodily health, and languish under malignant diseases, our Friend will afford us the most refreshing visits ; his delightful discourse will divert our pains, and revive our drooping spirits. All the cordials the Physician can prescribe for the benefit of our bodies, in this case, are vastly inferior to those administered to the soul by our other Self ; for he has as lively a sense of our infirmities, as we can have ourselves, and makes it his business to suit his behaviour to our weak condition. No advice shall be wanting to settle our affairs, before our departure out of this world ; and, even to the last moment of life, he will give ample demonstrations of his affection for us.

And tho' death itself, the most intolerable of all evils to particular Friends, as

it tears them from each other's embraces, and deprives the survivor of the dearest object of his love, should happen; yet even this event cannot altogether destroy the relation. It may remove the body from sight, that precious cabinet in which was lodged an invaluable treasure; but the mind, the treasure itself, it cannot hinder the living Friend from beholding. As they loved each other to the last, the survivor will still enjoy the pleasure of reflecting on the amiable qualities of the person deceased: He can summon his past experience to his assistance for the future, and the very memory of his absent Friend will be ever precious. As for his intimate companion, who is removed from his view, he knows he only submitted to that law unto which all are obliged, some time or other; and he is the less surprised that it should dissolve the union of their Friendship, since it separates that between soul and body; but as he believes that these dear companions will be re-united hereafter, so he expects that their Friendship will have a resurrection too, when they meet again; which pleasing prospect lessens his sorrow, and preserves an uninterrupted Tranquillity of mind.

And

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And if it be the natural tendency of true Friendship to afford us the utmost satisfaction attainable in the present state of our existence on earth, and render us contented in every circumstance of life, we shall, upon enquiry, find it no less profitable than pleasant and entertaining; for, by this undertaking, we make proficiency in useful Knowledge, increase and confirm our Virtue, and even promote our temporal Interest.

As to the improvement of our minds in useful Knowledge, by this means, it will convincingly appear, if we consider the nature and benefit of conversation in general. If man be a reasonable, he is also a social being; and there are few of this species, who do not desire to converse with others. Indeed, in this respect, the taste of mankind is very different, according to their various tempers and capacities; but thus far they all agree, in choosing companions of their own size and humour. Persons of sense and learning love to associate with the learned and judicious, whilst the weak and ignorant affect the company of men like themselves: But, however useless and trifling the dialogues of fools be, those of discreet and sensible men must,

of necessity, be very instructive. Discourse helps us to view our retired contemplations in a clearer light, as it enlargeth as well as digests them; for, by talking over our private thoughts to another who is acquainted with the subject under consideration, we enjoy the benefit of his candid and seasonable remarks to set us right, when we are mistaken in our notions. It hath been often observed, that they, who have conversed more with books than with men, and immured themselves in their closets, as recluses from the rest of mankind, notwithstanding all their reading, have been distanced, on several arguments, by those who have had much less learning, but, having good natural parts, have kept improving company: And, indeed, no body ever carried on a fair understanding with a man of sense, without receiving exceeding advantages by it; for by this means he learns to brighten his ideas, and range them in proper order, so that he can, with ease and readiness, apply them to the case in hand, and bring them into conversation, without impertinence or impropriety.

Now, if conversation in general be so beneficial, as has been hinted, the society
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of intimate Friends, such as I have described, must, of course, be much more conducive to this purpose. As we have supposed them to be men of sense, their discourse will always turn on improving topics; and can it be imagined that their familiar colloquies can be managed without mutual advantage? In promiscuous company, as more form and ceremony is required, so there is not that ingenuity and freedom used, which prevails among particular Friends; for we think it a necessary part of good breeding to acquiesce in the sentiments of others, and be very careful not to contradict them, as few can bear contradiction without a sensible uneasiness: But intimate companions, as they have nothing more at heart in their conferences, than the discovery of truth, so they, will on all occasions of this nature, express their minds freely and fully. Whatever be the theme of their discourse, they handle it with judgment, and consider it in every light, until at length it contributes to their mutual instruction. If they disagree in their opinions on any particular point, they carry on their debates with candour and good manners; and as the understanding, not passion or prejudice, presides in their gentle controversies, they have all
desirable

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desirable success. Public disputes are generally carried on with warmth, and the candidates engaged in them more concerned for victory than truth; but the persons, I am speaking of, have quite different views in their private reasonings. Conceit finds no reception in their heads, no more than ill humour in their breasts, and, when convinced, they confess their ignorance and receive new light with chearfulness and gratitude. As their Sense continually affords them proper matter for discourse, so their Good-nature obliges them to communicate their thoughts with ingenuity and freedom, and their Virtue is the constant standard of all their words as well as actions; so that every opportunity of meeting together opens a fruitful field for improvement. Thus, the lustre of their knowledge, as well as the strength of their love, is daily increased by conversation; and their interviews, like the table-entertainments among the ancients, are both instructive and pleasant.

But as wisdom is the most valuable branch of knowledge, as it has a kindly influence on our whole moral conduct; so this likewise admits of considerable improvements by intimate Friendship. The
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wisest men are capable of making proficiency in wisdom; and, after many years of experience and observation, must own, that they are still defective. *Salon*, who was a great Philosopher, in an advanced age, when one would have thought he had seen life in every view, and nothing could have escaped his notice, said, "I grow old, learning many things." Wisdom is acquired by time and reflection; and tho' we can never make ourselves complete masters of it, even within the compass of an age, it will become us, notwithstanding, to take all imaginable pains, to improve in it as much as we can, because it is so needful to direct us in every article of our behaviour. Now, the best method to cultivate this useful accomplishment is, to converse with such as are wise and judicious. Particular Friends grow insensibly wiser in one another's company; by imparting their prudent observations, their common fund of sense is increased; and every interview gives occasion for wholesome instructions.

And as they advance in Knowledge, so in Virtue too. As Virtue is the main pillar on which Friendship is founded, its interests will be principally regarded in the whole

whole superstructure : Nothing inconsistent with its precepts will ever be countenanced, but it is their constant endeavour to regulate all their thoughts, words, and actions by its excellent rules. If we look abroad in the world, we shall find that vice is set off to the best advantage by its votaries, and no pains are wanting to seduce unwary youths into a compliance with it: But, if we be provided with a faithful Friend, he will guide us by his counsel through the various scenes of life, and guard us against the delusions of such base impostors.

There is not any thing, which exposeth us more to temptations, than idleness or distraction of mind ; for these are avenues by which evil inclinations obtain admittance into the soul. But, when an union of wills is established upon the principles of right reason, the mind will be always both active and composed ; and the satisfaction arising from this delightful relation afford such a sufficient entertainment to our passions, that they will be in continual exercise, and neither need nor seek after improper objects.

Besides, if, by surprize or inadvertency,
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ON FRIENDSHIP. 45

we should be guilty of a false step, we have a kind monitor at hand to recover us, whose prudent and engaging reproof will make us ashamed at our remissness, and excite us to greater circumspection for the future. The want of such a wise counsellor, as this, has been of fatal consequence to many unhappy men, who have, through carelessness, given way to vicious habits, till at length they became obstinate and inveterate : Whereas a cordial and judicious Friend, who reproves with the utmost tenderness, for no other reason but the true benefit of the person reprov'd, might have prevented their ruin by the commanding check of friendly admonition. How happy then must they be who have a bosom-companion, as affectionately concerned for their welfare as his own, to direct and advise them ? If the least appearance of conceit, pride, or any other unreasonable inclination, tho' perhaps unobserved by themselves, discover itself in their behaviour, they are immediately apprized of it, and pathetically exhorted to guard against it.

As the best men are not free from failures in their actions, as I have already observed, so our Friend, by a long acquaintance

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As the best men are not free from failures in their actions, as I have already observed, so our Friend, by a long acquaintance

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quaintance with us, will, to be sure, discover our weak side, as a near view of a picture shews its blemishes: But tho' he see us, as we really are, stripped of every disguise, he makes no other use of our infirmities, than a skilful Physician does of his Patients, *viz.* to rectify and remove them.

And as the mutual advice of particular Friends is of mighty service to the preservation of their Virtue, so their examples will animate each other to a laudable emulation. How vast an influence must a good pattern have, when we love him who affords it? Love naturally inclines us to desire an entire resemblance of the person beloved; and, in the case of Friendship especially, it is not satisfied with a bare admiration of the amiable excellencies of the object on which it is placed, but inspires us with a laudable ambition of transcribing them. Thus, intimate companions strive to exceed one another in the practice of virtue, not out of envy, but a sincere affection; and every new obligation is a new motive to regard its dictates. They diffuse life and spirit, each into the other, and are hereby confirmed in their resolutions to live, according to the directions of honour and conscience.

Examples

- Examples in general have a very prevailing power; but that of a special acquaintance carries with it such commanding charms, as captivate, at once, and excite in us a vehement desire of being like him. Two faithful Friends are united in their moral designs, and time and experience increase the strength of their Virtue as well as their Affection; nay, Virtue is, at length, transformed into their nature and, instead of being an incumbrance, becomes a recreation. From what has been said, we learn that Friendship improves our faculties both moral and intellectual, increaseth our Knowledge and Virtue; and need I subjoin any other considerations to recommend this useful engagement? But, forasmuch as temporal Interest is an argument of no small force, I shall endeavour to prove, that even this advantage is the genuine consequence of mutual Love.

It has been already shewn, that intimate Friendship introduceth a Tranquillity of mind, in every circumstance of life. Now, if this be true, it must consequently assist a man in the management of his secular affairs; for when his understanding is free from distraction, and his passions are composed,

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posed, he can apply himself to business with pleasure and chearfulness. The fatigues, that usually accompany an active life, are by this means sweetened; and what might otherwise be perplexing is turned into a diversion. As an affectionate husband, who is comfortably married, tho' he have a numerous family, which depend upon the produce of his labours, for their subsistence, thinks no pain too great for this purpose: So he, that is furnished with a true Friend, can, with pleasure, exert his utmost diligence in the pursuit of his employment.

Besides, how needful is the good advice of a prudent Friend, to assist a man in the regulation of his worldly affairs? Tho' our honest endeavours be crowned with success, and we reap the fruit of our labours, by increasing our fortune; yet, even in this case, the counsel of him we love will be very useful to us: But, when our circumstances become involved by a train of disappointments, and such emergencies as these will sometimes arise, notwithstanding the utmost foresight and caution, what vast advantage shall we receive by his kind interposal? If a stranger offer his service, on this occasion, we have
reason

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reason to suspect him; for, if he be a cunning knave, he will make us a prey to his base designs; if a fool, he is incapable of advising us: But if our other Self undertake to direct us in extremity, we may be confident he will be a faithful counselor, and leave no measures untried to recover us out of this perplexity. A Friend is obliged, as he would answer his character, both by counsel and action, on every opportunity that falls in his way, to consult the Interest of his intimate companion: And, since he is possessed of all the qualifications which are necessary to the discharge of this important office, he will of course make good his engagements.

As a man's prosperity and advancement in life depend very much on the reputation he bears; so Friendship is, in this respect also, highly beneficial. We cannot, with a good grace, assert our own merit, or applaud ourselves; for, if we talk at this rate, we shall be thought vain and conceited; and such a conduct as this, tho' it may render us contemptible, and so prove prejudicial, will never recommend us to the love and esteem of prudent discerning persons. But what would inter-

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fere with modesty, if we said it ourselves,
 will appear to very great advantage from
 the mouth of a bosom-companion; for
 we may be sure that he will never suffer
 our parts or accomplishments to lie buried
 in oblivion, when the setting them, in the
 strongest point of light, has a proper ten-
 dency to promote our Interest in the world.
 Thus, I have attempted to shew the sever-
 al advantages that naturally follow upon
 mutual Love, and prove that it is, at once,
 both a pleasant and profitable engagement:
 But, because several objections have been
 raised against intimate Friendship, I shall,
 before I conclude this Essay, enter into
 a distinct consideration of them, and hope
 to make it appear, that they are ground-
 less and unreasonable.

Object. 1. It hath been objected by some,
 " That intimate Friendship is too sublime
 " an engagement for mankind in their
 " present circumstances; that it is scarce
 " possible, at least extreamly difficult, to
 " meet with a true Friend in the world,
 " where craft and policy so generally pre-
 " vail; that they, who are so weak as to
 " place a particular confidence in any of
 " their fellow-creatures, are commonly
 " disappointed in their expectations, how-
 " ever

“ ever sanguine; that the disadvantages,
 “ attending such a disappointment, pre-
 “ ponderate all the boasted effects of mu-
 “ tual Love, since the discovery of a
 “ faithful Friend is so very hazardous and
 “ uncertain:” From all which considera-
 tions, taken together, they conclude it
 foolish and unreasonable to choose any
 man whatsoever for a bosom companion.

In answer to this objection I shall
 prove, in the first place, that intimate
 Friendship, in its full extent and latitude,
 is far from being impossible. Whether
 we consult sacred or prophane history,
 we may meet with some remarkable in-
 stances, to convince us that there have been
 in the world such particular and faith-
 ful Friends, as I have described in the for-
 mer part of this discourse. The case of
Jonathan and *David* is very notorious;
 and the Prophet *Samuel* gives us an exact
 and beautiful relation of it. These great
 and generous spirits carried on the most
 exalted and refined sort of Friendship,
 that can well be imagined, and performed
 every single circumstance of it with a cri-
 tical nicety. As to *Jonathan*, who was
 one of the parties concerned in this noble
 undertaking, we are told, that he made a

covenant with David, and loved him as his own soul, 1 Sam. xviii. 3. That he gave, on all occasions, the most undeniable testimonies of his sincere affection to him, by rather choosing to incur the severe displeasure of his royal father, *Saul*, than desert his chosen Friend; nay, 1 Sam. xx. 4. he assures *David*, that *whatever his soul could desire, he would do for him.*

David, on the other hand, was no less grateful than *Jonathan* was obliging; for he not only made a just acknowledgment of the favours he had received from his other Self, whilst living, but in the funeral elegy he composed upon the death of *Jonathan*, he laments the greatness of his loss in the most mournful accents. This he sufficiently demonstrates, when, talking of his deceased Friend, he thus expresseth himself: *I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan: Very pleasant hast thou been unto me: Thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women,* 2 Sam. i. 26. If we consider, that *Jonathan* was heir apparent to his father's crown and dignity; that *Saul* was an inveterate enemy of *David's*, and consequently that *Jonathan* could not carry on a fair understanding with a person his father abhorred, without provoking his

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his indignation; that *David* was appointed by GOD to succeed *Saul*, as king of *Judah*, and himself thereby, of course, excluded from the succession; I say, if we seriously reflect upon these and other circumstances of *Jonathan's* affection to *David*, we shall find reasons to conclude that it was justly stiled *wonderful*: And farther, if we take a view of the purity and worth of the object, on which this affection was placed, *viz. a man after God's own heart*, the virtuous motives that led him to make choice of such an holy person for his bosom-companion, and the religious strictness which accompanied every part of his behaviour, in this capacity, we shall be convinced that his Love to his Friend did surpass the *Love of women*.

I Have been the more particular in my account of this sublime instance of Friendship, because it gives us a full and lively idea of the prodigious force of mutual Love. This noble example may serve instead of ten-thousand others, to illustrate the point under consideration; for the sacred engagement of *Jonathan* and *David* was of a seraphic nature, like the *union of pure with pure*, which *Milton* speaks of, when he describes the Love of the spot-

less Angels. But tho' the case of this happy pair is, in some respects, singular and extraordinary; yet there have been many true and steady Friends, since their time.

Solomon, who is represented to have been the wisest man upon earth, and had both capacity and opportunity of making the most impartial enquiry into the matter, lays it down as a maxim in his Proverbs, that *there is a Friend that sticketh closer than a Brother*; one that will adhere to us, tho' our own flesh and blood should forsake us, *Prov. xviii. 24.* The son of *Syrach* too, whose moral aphorisms have been so generally applauded by the judicious, since they carry their own evidence along with them, and the truth of them is confirmed by daily experience, does every-where sprinkle his writings with the highest encomiums upon intimate Friendship. He does, indeed, afford us the most apposite cautions, to direct us to a prudent choice of another Self; but there is not the least hint in all his Discourses on this head, to shew that mutual Love is impracticable.

If we look into the *New Testament*, we shall see, that nothing is more urgently enforced upon all Christians, than brotherly

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ly Love. It is the very genius and design of the Gospel, to promote peace and good will among men; and our Saviour himself teaches us, that *we should love our neighbour*, i. e. every other man, *as we do ourselves*. The Apostles, in imitation of the great example of their LORD and MASTER, always recommended love and unity to the world. St. Paul particularly exhorts the Romans *to be kindly affectionate one to another*; and, in all his epistles, delivers great encomiums on Charity. Now, to what purpose are those precepts and exhortations given, if what they enjoin is impossible to be performed? Doubtless, in the primitive ages of Christianity, when religion did so manifestly discover its excellent effects in the lives of its professors, there were many who demonstrated the Love they had to others, by an uninterrupted strain of obliging offices. The greatest and most uncontested proof, that can be desired, of sincere affection to a Friend, is to venture one's life in his defence, or lay it down for his sake; yet Revelation assures us, that for a Friend one would even *dare to die*.

But, without having recourse to the sacred Oracles, Heathen Authors afford us
E 4 a variety

a variety of instances, sufficient to prove the possibility of intimate Friendship. The stories of *Theseus* and *Pirithous*, *Pylades* and *Orestes*, whom no dangers could separate from each other's embraces, are very surprising: But the narrative which *Virgil* relates, concerning the reciprocal affection of *Nisus* and *Euryalus*, is not to be read, without the profoundest admiration. The *Trojans*, being reduced to the last extremities, sent this pair of Friends to recall *Æneas*; and they had not proceeded far on their journey, before they were surprised by a considerable number of the enemy's horse. *Volscens*, having taken *Euryalus* prisoner, resolves to revenge upon him the death of *Sulmo* and *Tagus*, who were slain by *Nisus*: But *Nisus*, seeing his other Self in such critical circumstances, bravely took the whole guilt upon himself, and chearfully would have fallen a sacrifice in his stead. The Poet represents him, as speaking to the *Rutulians* in the following words:

Me, me: adsum qui feci: in me conver-
tite ferrum,

O Rutuli, mea fraus omnis: nihil iste
nec ausus,

Nec potuit: cælum hoc & conscia fidera
testor:

Tantum Infelicem nimium dilexit amicum.

Æn. ix.

Me,

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Me, me, he cry'd, turn all your swords
alone

On me; the fact confess'd, the fault
my own.

He neither could, nor durst, the guilt-
less youth;

Ye moon and stars, bear witness to
the truth!

His only crime (if Friendship can
offend)

Is too much Love to his unhappy
Friend.

Dryden.

Several other examples of mutual Love
might be collected from the Poets; but
these, already taken notice of, are suffi-
cient to my present purpose.

And, if we examine the writings of the
Philosophers as well as the Poets, we shall
meet with instances of true Friendship.
I have, in the former part of this discourse,
had occasion to mention the reciprocal af-
fection of *Plutarch* and his brother *Timon*;
which is related by *Plutarch* himself: And
Cicero, in his *Offices*, gives us a remark-
able account of the Friendship of *Damon*
and *Pithias*. These two famous *Pythago-
reans* had such a love and regard, each
for

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for the other, that when *Dionysius* had sentenced one of them to death, and the person under sentence of condemnation only desired a reprieve for a few days, that he might be at liberty to visit his friends and settle his affairs, the other became surety, body for body, for his appearance. Was not this undertaking an admirable and convincing proof of the strength, as well as sincerity of his love? It is observable, however, that tho' the prisoner was permitted to go out of jail, for a limited time, he returned at the day appointed; and the Tyrant himself was so charmed with the generosity and justice of this noble pair, that he not only granted a pardon to him that was condemned, but intreated them to receive him as a third in their Friendship. *Ovid*, who was by the order of *Augustus* sent into banishment, and in his exile, as he tells us, *Tristium*, Lib. i. endured as many misfortunes, as there are stars in the firmament; who complains of the base usage of several of his old Friends, that deserted him in extremity; yet even he not only acknowledges with gratitude the loyalty and faithfulness of his wife, whom he compares to *Penelope* and other females celebrated for true conjugal Love, but likewise the inviolable constancy

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constancy of some of his own sex, who continued their Friendship for him, notwithstanding his distressed circumstances.

What has been said, I presume, does fully shew, that intimate Friendship is possible. It must be confessed, that few instances of this sort are recorded in history, in comparison of the many examples of treachery and dissimulation which every where occur in those writings: But then it must be considered, that public characters, such as great warriors or eminent politicians, are chiefly taken notice of in historical accounts, and the behaviour of private persons is not thought of importance enough to be honourably transmitted down to posterity, among whom, if any where, mutual love is to be found.

True Friendship affects obscurity, and, like a subterraneous current, is not exposed to the view of every vulgar eye. The streams, indeed, that flow from this hidden fountain of intimate Love, may be observed; but itself is lodged in the bosom. They, who are possessed of this treasure, do not covet the praise of the populace, which the ambitious man too greedily

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greedily grasps after; but find its privacy to be an additional circumstance to its value. As true Piety centers in the heart, so Friendship in the breast: And therefore, no wonder, if examples of this kind are not so generally known.

But tho' intimate Friendship avoid pomp and show, and it is, therefore, a great rarity to discover a true Friend; it will not hence follow that there are none at all who answer this character. Several instances have been produced, to confirm the truth of this matter of fact. Now, what has been may be; and I cannot see, why we may not as justly assert that there are, now, no persons of Sense, Good-nature and Virtue in the world, as that there are no true Friends, since they, who are possessed of those excellent qualities, will, of course, attract the esteem and love of one another. No considerate man, I believe, will deny, that there are living proofs of undissembled conjugal Love; and why persons of the same sex should not be as capable of carrying on the strictest Friendship is, in my opinion, an unaccountable mystery, because no wife is more equal to the discharge of the delicate office of an intimate companion or bosom-confident

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confident to her husband, than one man is to perform it to another.

In answer to the objection proposed, I add farther, *2dly*, That, since it is not impossible to find a faithful Friend, admitting it to be very difficult to make such a discovery, it cannot be thence fairly concluded, that it is foolish and unreasonable to make the most industrious search after so precious a jewel as that of an intimate companion, or to accept of the service of one, in all respects, qualified for this important engagement, when he comes in our way. I own that the utmost caution is needful in this affair, and that we should never place a particular confidence in any man, until we be, first, fully satisfied that he hath both capacity and inclination to perform what we expect from him; for rashness in acting is always an argument of indiscretion, and in the present case, as well as others, may prove of dangerous consequence: But, after all, is the difficulty of finding a true Friend a valid reason, that we should never set about this enquiry?

No wise man will dispute its being difficult to meet with a prudent and agreeable wife,

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wife, and that it requires great judgment and deliberation to make a proper choice; But will he, from this consideration, argue, that it is foolish to marry at all, since matrimony is a divine institution, and, if engaged in with discretion, produceth the best effects, not only to the parties immediately concerned, but society in general? A merchant may turn bankrupt, and a man, in the pursuit of any other business, may miscarry: But will it thence follow, that they must do nothing in life, for the support of themselves and their families, but consume their days in a stupid indolence? Who does not observe the fallacies of this kind of reasoning? And, were it allowed to take place in religion, it would, at once, over-turn it. The duties of Religion and Virtue are attended with difficulties, and the performance of them requires the greatest resolution and diligence: But is it, therefore, reasonable to decline obedience to the commands of the Supreme Being, on which our happiness, here and hereafter, have an inseparable and necessary dependence?

These considerations, I have mentioned, sufficiently demonstrate, that the difficulty of attaining a thing is not an argument
against

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against labour and application, in the pursuit after it : And, by parity of reason, the difficulty of finding a true Friend is not a solid argument, why we should neglect to make the strictest search after such an inestimable jewel. In other cases, the rarity of a thing enhances its value; and we are naturally desirous of things that are uncommon. Gold does not lie upon the surface of the earth, but must be dug out of the oar with fatigue and pains, if ever it be acquired; and no other objects, that are valuable, are to be obtained without proportionable diligence. If a design be honourable in itself, the difficulties attending the execution of it should be rather an additional motive to animate our ambition, than discourage us from the attempt; and, if we are so happy as to discover a true Friend, the beneficial advantages, that follow upon intimate Friendship, will abundantly recompence our utmost pains in the enquiry.

But let us suppose the worst that can happen, in the case before us, that a wise good-natured man, notwithstanding all his caution, is deceived in his choice; that his own familiar companion, in whom he trusted, should lift up his heel against him,

which

which was the misfortune of King *David* himself ; that his love should turn into a downright aversion ; even this disappointment is not, perhaps, so dangerous and insupportable, as it is imagined. It is no reflection upon a man of the best sense, that he is sometimes mistaken in his judgment ; no more than it is inexcusable in a good man to err in his charitable opinion of others. This unexpected treachery, from him whom he looked upon as his other Self, will, no doubt, surprise him, to a degree of astonishment ; and he will be, thereby, roused to defend himself against the malicious effects of his enemy's fury : But, as he is conscious of his own sincerity, and that he has given no just occasion for this ungenerous usage, he will be able still to preserve that inward Tranquillity which has never hitherto deserted him ; for his innocence will supply the place of his deceitful companion, and afford him no small comfort and satisfaction. If the traitor should uncase him to the view of the world, and scandalously divulge his bosom-secrets, so that they become the subject of common fame, which is the very worst he can do ; even this event is far from being intolerable to one of his temper and disposition.

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The only secrets, which a wise and virtuous person can be supposed to communicate, even unto a bosom-friend, are either some little follies and oversights in his life, or the true state of his circumstances in the world: But the publication of neither of those is so prejudicial, as it is supposed. As to his indiscretions, they will be charitably overlooked by the prudent part of mankind, who have a just sense of their own; and the reflections of the censorious multitude are beneath the notice of a man of sense. And as to the discovery of the true state of his circumstances in the world, if they be involved and embarrassed, it may be dangerous, as it affects his credit and reputation, and may expose him to the severity of base and designing wretches, who delight in the misery of unhappy men: Yet, even in this crisis, all persons of real worth will not only detest the treachery of the publisher, but exert their utmost power and interest to preserve him, that is thus abused, from ruin.

Hence it appears, that the disadvantages of falshood in a Friend are far from being intolerable, tho' they be, indeed,
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very great misfortunes : But if we balance this loss with the vast gain that is the necessary consequence of true Friendship, allowing them to be equally probable, the former is lost in the comparison, and the scale will preponderate on the side of the latter. The genuine effects of undissembled mutual Love I have proved, already, to be highly beneficial; as this amicable engagement exceedingly promotes the pleasure and profit of the parties concerned, by affording them Tranquillity of mind, improving their Knowledge and Virtue, and likewise advancing their temporal Interest. Now, what proportion do the inconveniencies of a disappointment, in the choice of an unfaithful companion, bear unto these mighty and numerous advantages that attend upon true Friendship?

Besides, it ought to be considered, on this occasion, that upon a strict and accurate enquiry, it is much more probable, that we shall meet with a true Friend, than that we shall be disappointed. A judicious person, such as I have already described, as he has an insight into human nature; so if he make use of this knowledge in trying the temper and capacity of a man, before he contract an intimacy with

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with him, it is a thousand to one, that he will not miscarry. It is possible, indeed, he may, notwithstanding his judgment and application, be deceived in his choice, but it is very improbable that he will; for his observation and experience assist him in forming just sentiments of the real disposition of another; and, having wisdom for his guide, he is enabled to judge, whether he be qualified to discharge the various offices of intimate Friendship, or not? Since then the discovery of a faithful Friend is not only possible but probable too; and that the advantages of mutual Love are so vast and numerous; common prudence will direct us to labour with all our might, in search of such an invaluable treasure,

The danger of a disappointment, in this case, is no sufficient reason, to discourage the most vigorous pursuit after so desirable an object, as a true Friend. The only use a wise man should make of this consideration is, to be more careful and cautious in his proceedings this way; for is there any thing in life, however valuable, in the pursuit of which our best endeavours may not prove abortive? Riches are generally courted
F 2 by

by mankind; and the most prudent leave no honest measures unattempted, to advance their Fortune in the world: And yet how many are disappointed in their expectations, tho' they have employed the best means for attaining this end; and when they have so far succeeded, as to enjoy a plentiful share of worldly wealth, yet are not riches liable to be lost by a thousand unforeseen chances and accidents? Honour, that is a fading flower, capable of being blasted by the same wind that first created it, is the very center of the desires and hopes of the ambitious; and they think no designs or undertakings too difficult and dangerous, if they can, at length, gain popular applause. Nay, learning, wisdom, and the most excellent qualities are not so much the property of any man, as that he may not be deprived of them. Why then should we expect to hold a bosom-companion by a more certain tenure, than we do our lands or any other possessions? From the whole, I hope it may be fairly concluded, that it is far from being foolish and unreasonable, to make choice of an intimate Friend; and that the difficulties, attending this mutual engagement, ought by no means to discourage us from setting about it.

Obj.

Obj. 2. It hath been farther objected against intimate Friendship, "That it contradicts self-love, which is or ought to be the measure of our love to others." It must be owned that self-love is a natural principle, and hath a very powerful influence over human actions; but then it is no less certain, that even this principle may have a wrong bias, and become vicious, when it is not under the direction of reason. Every man is a member of society; and, as such, obliged to consult the common good, as well as his own private interest. The love of mankind is implanted in our nature, as well as the love of ourselves; and the man, that, to serve himself, acts to the prejudice of his country, performs a base and dishonourable part. It would be a poor plea for a criminal, at the bar, to plead that he defrauded his neighbour, out of a mercenary view to gratify the love he had for himself, which lay him under the highest obligations, to prefer his own interest to that of others. Would not such an excuse as this be thought, by all considerate men, to add insolence to his wickedness, and greatly enhance the malignity of his crime? In a word, self-love, if it be not restrained within
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proper bounds, by honour and conscience, is of a very fatal tendency to society, by opening a passage to all unsociable vices.

Besides, it is observable, in the case before us, that true Friendship is so far from opposing the genuine dictates of self-love, that it directly promotes our own interest. Reason teacheth us, that it is always our duty to study the benefit of others, when it does not interfere with our own advantage. Now, by obliging our other Self, who loves us as he does himself, we oblige ourselves; for the desires and inclinations of particular Friends are all of a piece, like different streams that meet together in the same channel. As marriage renders two persons one flesh, Friendship makes them one soul; so that what pleaseth one is a pleasure to both, and they have no separate interests. To love those that love us is no more than doing as we would be done by, which is an instance of common justice; and, therefore, by choosing a bosom-friend, and acting up to this character, we cannot be said to act unreasonably.

Object. 3. It hath been likewise objected against intimate Friendship, " That it
" contracts

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“ contracts our Love within too narrow
“ limits, by placing it on a single object,
“ and makes us regardless of the rest of
“ mankind; so that to be an intimate
“ Friend is to be a bad neighbour and
“ an enemy to society.” To this objection it is easily replied, that the matter of fact, which it supposeth to be true, is absolutely false. Can it be imagined that men of Sense, Good-nature, and Virtue, who make reason the standard of all their actions, should love one another to such a degree, as to be careless and unconcerned, with respect to the good of others? The flaming Generosity, which diffuseth its kindly influences over all they say or do, will never admit of such an indifference.

It must be confessed, that the love of an intimate acquaintance is stronger and more vigorous, than that of other men, as the heat of the sun is more intense and violent, when its rays are collected in a burning-glass, than when dispersed abroad: Yet, as this glorious body, tho’ its rays are thus contracted in a point, does, notwithstanding, shine on other places of the earth; so, tho’ a man love his bosom-friend with a peculiar warmth of affection,

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tion, he loves, at the same time, all that partake of his nature.

Thus, I have considered the most material objections against intimate Friendship, that have occurred either in books or conversation; and flatter myself, that what has been said is sufficient to confute them. I have now finished what I designed in this Essay, having insisted upon the nature and effects of mutual Love; and shall, therefore, conclude this Discourse with the wise advice of the son of Syrach, Eccles. vii. 18. which evidently shews the high opinion he entertained concerning intimate Friendship: *Change not a Friend for any good; neither a faithful Brother for the gold of Ophir.*

F I N I S.

